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January 20, 2014

Tom Tidwell, Chief  
Department of Agriculture  
US Forest Service  
USDA Forest Service, EMC  
Attn. Judicial & Administrative Review Group  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Mailstop Code: 1104  
Washington, DC 20250-1104

**OBJECTION TO THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT AND REVISED  
LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE LAKE TAHOE BASIN  
MANAGEMENT UNIT**

Please accept this letter as a formal objection to the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (Plan). The responsible official for these documents is Randy Moore, Regional Forester, Pacific Southwest Region. I meet the criteria for filing an objection as I submitted individual substantive formal comments on the draft EIS and Plan (copy of comments enclosed).

I object to the following sections of the final EIS and Plan:

1. The EIS does not adequately identify all potentially significant impacts associated with potential departures from "Guidelines" that are included in the Standards and Guidelines (S&Gs), Part 3 of the Plan. This shortcoming is, in part, based on the failure of the Plan to specify the "intent" of each guideline (what is the performance objective that is intended to be met by the Guideline). (See Objection 2 for list of S&Gs.) Without this information, the USFS lacks the basis to state that there will not be significant impacts from implementing allowed deviations from S&Gs since the scope of possible deviations are not bounded by any meaningful and measurable performance goals or objectives.. This position is supported by the language in Appendix O which states "...the plan allows considerable management discretion at the project level. Individual line officers may opt to make decisions at the limit of what is permitted by the forest plan's Standards and Guidelines..." Without clear performance goals or objectives associated with each G&S that is labeled a "Guideline" there are no "limits" subject to independent analysis to this discretion.

Furthermore, SG2 and SG4 (page 105 of the Plan) specify compliance with applicable air and water quality standards. If the two S&Gs were written to specify a method of compliance with applicable standards one could consider the method a guideline as there logically could be other methods that would still achieve the intent of the Guideline - compliance with the applicable air or water standards. However, since the two S&Gs state "Design all Forest management activities to prevent violations of applicable ... standards" the logical interpretation of a deviation (which is allowed as these two S&Gs are identified as "Guidelines") is that Forest management activities do not have to be designed to prevent violations of applicable standards. The EIS does not identify any adverse (significant or otherwise) associated with a deviation from these S&Gs as allowed for in the Plan. As example, if a water quality standard is the drinking water standard and a desired condition is maintaining waters that are suitable for drinking (DC11 page 17), how does designing a project that does not meet applicable water quality standards result in attainment of listed desired conditions and how can implementation of such a design not result in a significant impact (violation of a drinking water standard)?

Suggestion for Improvement - Convert S&G 2 and 4 to "Standards." Convert the remaining S&Gs to "Standards" or add language to each that clearly identifies the performance goal or objective that the S&G will achieve if implemented. This performance goal or objective would be the benchmark that a decision maker or member of the public could evaluate any proposed deviation from the S&G.

Conformance with 36CFR 219.54(c)(7): See enclosed August 28, 2012 comments beginning on page 1, section on Lack of Clarity. Note: S&G numbering changed between the Draft and Final but objections are related to the same substantive S&G.

2. Part 3 of the Plan, list a number of S&Gs that are identified as "Guidelines." However, many of the S&Gs are written as a prescription. Nowhere in the Plan is a linkage to the performance goal or objective that is being achieved by the S&G nor is there any specific performance goal or objective associated with the S&G. Without this information, it is impossible for a USFS decision maker or the public to perform any meaningful evaluation of any proposed deviation at either the program or project level to determine if the deviation meets the intent of the "Guideline." As written, the Plan leaves unbridled discretion to the decision maker at the project level as it would be impossible for either the decision maker or the public to evaluate if the deviation meets the intent of the Guideline. This objection applies to the following S&Gs: 2, 4, 7, 10-20, 28, 30, 33, 43 - 46, 51, 115, 118 - 120. (Note: These S&Gs correspond to the S&Gs that I commented on from the draft Plan even though some of the numbers have changed. Also, I am objecting to "new" S&Gs added in the final that were not in the draft Plan that have similar deficiencies.)

Suggestion for Improvement: Convert these S&Gs to "Standards" or add language to each that clearly identifies the performance goal or objective that the S&G will achieve if implemented. This performance goal or objective would be the benchmark

that a decision maker or member of the public could evaluate any proposed deviation from the S&G.

Conformance with 36CFR 219.54(c)(7): See enclosed August 28, 2012 comments beginning on page 1, section on Lack of Clarity. Note: S&G numbering changed between the Draft and Final but objections are related to the same substantive S&G.

3. The USFS has intentionally failed to recognize the regulations of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) in the list of applicable laws and regulations beginning on page 1-19 of the EIS. While the list includes the Lake Tahoe Basin 208 Plan - TRPA, it fails to include the TRPA Regional Plan or Code of Ordinances as these are the implementation regulations for the 208 Plan.

Suggestion for Improvement: Add the TRPA Regional Plan and Code of Ordinances to this list.

Conformance with 36CFR 219.54(c)(7): See enclosed August 28, 2012 comments beginning on page 3, first full paragraph.

4. Air Quality - I am repeating the comment made on the draft Plan and EIS

The air quality analysis in the EIS includes a number of tables and figures that list the amount of air toxic emissions that are expected to be generated by wild fire and prescribed fire for each alternative over the first 10 years of Plan implementation. The information indicates that prescribed fire generates significantly more air toxic emissions than wildfire. The information also indicates that that implementation of Alternative B (similar to new Alternative E) would result in the least amount of air toxic emissions from prescribed fire and from the combined total of prescribed and wildfire while causing slightly higher emissions due to wildfire. Implementation of Alternative B (similar to new Alternative E) also results in the lowest black carbon emissions and greenhouse gas emission of the four alternatives considered. The vegetation management components of Alternative B appear to be most beneficial over the other alternatives. Based on the available information, it appears that one factor contributing to the lower prescribed fire emissions is more reliance on removing biomass rather than allowing it to remain and be part of a prescribed fire. The 1982 Planning Rule includes a number of provisions that are applicable to a more thorough evaluation of mitigation measures. Section 219.12(e)(1) includes a statement that " Budgets shall not be a constraint. Management requirements must be designed to maintain air quality at levels that meets or **exceeds** (emphasis added) Federal, State and/or local standards or regulations." (Section 219.27(a)(12)) Based on these two planning principles, it seems reasonable for the LTBMU to consider an alternative that results in less air emissions due to prescribed fires that

may include significantly more biomass removal or other actions resulting in less material that would be left to burn in a prescribed fire.

I have personally witnessed large amount of biomass left after vegetation management activities that will eventually be burned in a prescribed fire. Some of this material is in close proximity to existing forest and paved roads and in the exact same area where other biomass was hauled out of the forest. The reason for taking some material and not the remainder was either cost (contract budget precluded hauling more material), end of contract duration or current availability of sites that could use the material.

Suggestion for Improvement: Develop a new S&G that requires biomass removal that is in excess of that needed for ground cover or total mass per acre (includes standing and on-ground material) except in situations where access would create other environmental concerns or effects. This would also require more open-ended contracts that would incorporate coming back in out years to haul material when sites could accept the biomass. It is typical that burn piles sit for three to five years before they are burned. This creates a window of opportunity that is currently not utilized to reduce air emissions further.

Conformance with 36CFR 219.54(c)(7): See enclosed August 28, 2012 comments beginning on page 4, section on Failure to Fully Evaluate Mitigation Measures.

##### 5. Vegetation Management to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire

The USFS along with local fire agencies have been taking significant actions to perform vegetation management activities that are intended to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and improve forest health. In many areas of the Basin these actions can be accomplished with methods and mitigation measures that result in less than significant effects. However, there will likely be areas (steep hillsides, areas with consistent high soil moisture, dangerous conditions, etc) where it is necessary to perform vegetation management yet current methods may not scientifically demonstrate the lack of significant effects. This Plan and EIS should acknowledge this possibility giving the USFS management the tools needed and "permission" to perform needed vegetation management in these hopefully rare instances.

Suggestion for Improvement: The EIS should acknowledge that there may be isolated situation where there will be significant effects from necessary vegetation management activities. The EIS and Plan should identify under what conditions these significant effects will be allowed and mitigation measures to reduce the impact as much as feasible.

Conformance with 36CFR 219.54(c)(7): See enclosed August 28, 2012 comments beginning on page 5, section on Other Issues, Item A.



6. Multiple Entries - See prior comment F under Other Issues on page 6 in the August 28, 2012 comment letter enclosed.

Suggestion for Improvement: Add the concept of reducing the number of entries by thinning to the lower range of desired tree stocking levels into Alternative E.

Conformance with 36CFR 219.54(c)(7): See enclosed August 28, 2012 comments beginning on page 5, section on Other Issues, Item F.

7. S&G33 - Removal of trees 30 inch dbh and larger - see prior comments G under Other Issues on page 6 in the August 28, 2012 comment letter enclosed.

The final Plan eliminated criteria d, e and f, and added new criteria c and e. While these changes improve the S&G, they do not fix the problem. What are the preferred species stated in criteria d? The Plan is making a judgement that aspen and meadow restoration are more important than maintaining large trees. If changes in vegetation type are occurring (from meadow and aspen to forest), maybe it is because conditions are more suited for these vegetation types. There are times when man should not alter natural changes just to suit his model of "ideal" conditions.

Suggestion for Improvement: Make this a "Standard" rather than a "Guideline." Eliminate criteria c, d and e. If d is retained, state what are the preferred species and why and under what situation should less preferred large trees be removed.

Conformance with 36CFR 219.54(c)(7): See enclosed August 28, 2012 comments beginning on page 5, section on Other Issues, Item G.

8. Elimination of S&G5 shown in the draft Plan from the final Plan.

There is no stated logical reason for deleting this S&G. Discharging solid and liquid waste into waters or onto the land where it will enter surface waters or groundwaters without permits should not occur.

Suggestion for Improvement: Add this S&G back and label it a "Standard."

Conformance with 36CFR 219.54(c)(7): This is a new issue as SG5 in the draft Plan was removed in the Final version.

9. The draft Plan and EIS were incorrectly noticed as being in the States of Arizona and California. There was no reference to the State of Nevada where a portion of the project is located. The State of California was correctly identified in the notice. The project is not located in the State of Arizona. The Code of Federal Regulations requires agencies to correctly identify the State(s) where the proposed action is located. This error cannot be corrected by allowing comment on a final EIS and Plan. Instead, the USFS should have either re-noticed the original draft EIS and Plan

or made changes in the draft EIS and Plan and noticed them correctly. In either case, the USFS should have provided an appropriate comment period on the drafts rather than ignoring this mistake and going directly to final versions of the Plan and EIS.

Conformance with 36CFR 219.54(c)(7): See enclosed August 28, 2012 comments beginning on page 1, Procedural Issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Harold Singer".

Harold Singer

Enclosure: Comments on the draft Plan and EIS dated August 28, 2012

Harold Singer  
P.O. Box 7493  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96158

August 28, 2012

Draft Land Management Plan / Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit  
35 College Drive  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

## INTRODUCTION

The Lake Tahoe Management Unit (LTBMU) has circulated a draft Land Management Plan (Plan) and draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for public review. It is an impressive package of documents that seem to cover the basic requirements for updating a Land Management Plan. However, it fails to include adequate justification for stated conclusions and specific references to support scientific positions. While it references technical reports that are not included in the circulated material, these references are generic and the reader is left to determine which report and the specific section that supports the numerous conclusions.

## PROCEDURAL ISSUES

The Federal Register listing dated June 1, 2012 indicates that the project is in California and Arizona (enclosure 1). The due date for comments specified in the Federal Register is August 29, 2012. On June 1, 2012, the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit circulated a news release (enclosure 2) that was placed on its web site. The news release states: "The alternatives will be available for review and comment for 90 days, until August 30, 2012."

Based on the failure to correctly indicate where the project is located and the inconsistent notice of when comments are due, the LTBMU must re-circulate the documents for review after proper notice.

## LACK OF CLARITY

The EIS purports to identify the possible environmental effects of implementation of the Plan. The Plan includes broad statements of "Desired Conditions" along with "Program Strategies" and "Objectives." Additionally, the Plan includes "Standards" and "Guidelines" with an explanation that a Standard is "a mandatory constraint on project and activity decisionmaking" while a Guideline is "a constraint on project and activity decisionmaking that allows for departure from its terms, so long as the intent of the guideline is met."

This spectrum of Plan descriptions, from a macro-level to detail standards and guidelines, can be useful to communicate a clear path as what the LTBMU intends to accomplish and how it intends to implement its vision. However, due to the large number of Guidelines rather than Standards and the vague wording of the Guidelines, the LTBMU grants itself broad discretion as to how it will eventually implement the Plan thereby precluding the reader or a project reviewer from evaluating the potential environmental impacts of either the Plan or a project or activity.

A glaring example of this is in SG1 in which the LTBMU states that it will “Design all Forest management activities to prevent violations of applicable air quality standards” and will “Implement prescribed fire such that air quality standards are not exceeded.” The LTBMU then labels this as a Guideline, which, according to its own definition, allows departure from the terms of the Guideline. In order to determine the intent of a Guideline it should include a specific performance objective such that deviations from the prescriptive nature of the Guideline could be evaluated as to conformance with the performance objective. SG3 through SG7 are similar examples of either poor drafting or situations where the LTBMU is telling its staff and the public that it is acceptable to violate standards set by other entities. A simple fix would be to label these as Standards.

SG2 is an example of where there is no performance objective other than “as needed” which is not defined. Does the “as needed” refer to meeting standards set by other entities, preventing health related effects to workers or a nearby community or some other vague objective. Without this level of detail, it is impossible to evaluate the potential environmental impact of implementation of the guideline, which, as worst case, could be no fugitive dust control on any project.

The above are examples of why most guidelines in the Plan should be labeled as Standards (specifically SG 10 – 20, 29, 31, 33, 35 - 37, 42, 87, 98, 101 – 104, 107, 117 – 123) and those that remain as guidelines should be re-written to include clear performance objectives. SG90 needs a designation and additional coverage should be allowed for necessary health and safety improvements and site-specific BMPs.

Some of the Objectives in the Plan include a commitment for implementation of actions. While some include a specific year (i.e. OBJ26 – “by 2020”) others use terms such as “within the life of the Forest Plan” or “over the last 10 years of plan implementation.” These commitments are useless in terms of both analyzing the potential for significant environmental impacts due to many small projects occurring over a short period and tracking implementation of Plan Objectives. The planning horizon of the Plan is stated as the “next 10 to 15 years” on page 1-6 of the EIS. However, the current Plan has been in effect for the past 24 years. Therefore, the LTBMU could be required to implement actions by 2023 (assuming the Plan is adopted in 2013 and has a 10 year life), by 2028

(assuming the Plan is adopted in 2013 and has a 15 year life) or by whenever if there is a lack of funding or policy direction to prepare a new Plan as required by law. These problems must be addressed by stating specific dates (month, day and year) or specific time (e.g. 5 years) from Plan adoption for implementing these Objectives. Also, the Plan should indicate how implementation would be staged so as to avoid potential significant impacts and to judge progress towards full implementation of the Objective.

The applicable laws and regulations list beginning on page 1-18 of the EIS does not include the TRPA Compact and Regional Plan. Even with the caveat that the list is not complete, the glaring omission of these very important laws and regulations that are integral to projects and activities in the Lake Tahoe Basin implies that the LTBMU is not bound by these laws and regulations. The fact that the EIS includes reference to these laws and regulations in the section titled "Non-Forest Service Lands" furthers the implication that the LTBMU is not bound by these laws and regulations even though it controls more than 75% of the land in the Lake Tahoe basin.

The EIS includes a list of "elements common to all alternatives" on page 2-3. One element is that the current MVUM and Snowmobile Guide would remain in effect. However, in many other sections of the EIS, the LTBMU states that the Snowmobile Guide would change under Alternative D if Congress approves the proposed Wilderness Designations. A person concerned about maintaining existing snowmobile access could easily interpret the statement on page 2-3 as satisfying their concern and would not be aware of the implications of Alternative D without reading the full document. This inconsistency within the draft EIS is very misleading.

#### FAILURE TO DISCLOSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The EIS indicates, on page 3-509, that OSV users displaced by a wilderness designation of the Freel IRA would likely trailer their machines to the Hope Valley area. The EIS must evaluate the effects of additional VMTs on air quality and evaluate the environmental impacts on resources in the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest due to this additional use and demand for winter parking.

The designation of the Freel IRA as wilderness would also eliminate the current use of the area for mountain bike riding. Given the proximity of this area to both permanent residents and visitors and the increase in bike lanes and trails from the urban areas, many recreational users can ride their bike to the area rather than use a car. One can logically expect an increase in VMTs that must be considered in the EIS as a result of these recreational users driving to a remote location to find the same user experience that they had in the Freel IRA. Also, the EIS must consider the environmental effects of increased use and parking demand created by this relocation.



## FAILURE TO FULLY EVALUATE MITIGATION MEASURES

The air quality analysis in the EIS includes a number of tables and figures that list the amount of air toxic emissions that are expected to be generated by wild fire and prescribed fire for each alternative over the first 10 years of Plan implementation. The information indicates that prescribed fire generates significantly more air toxic emissions than wildfire. The information also indicates that implementation of Alternative B would result in the least amount of air toxic emissions from prescribed fire and from the combined total of prescribed and wildfire while causing slightly higher emissions due to wildfire. Implementation of Alternative B also results in the lowest black carbon emissions and greenhouse gas emission of the four alternatives considered. The vegetation management components of Alternative B appear to be most beneficial over the other alternatives. Based on the available information, it appears that one factor contributing to the lower prescribed fire emissions is more reliance on removing biomass rather than allowing it to remain and be part of a prescribed fire. The 1982 Planning Rule includes a number of provisions that are applicable to a more thorough evaluation of mitigation measures. Section 219.12 (e)(1) includes a statement that "Budgets shall not be a constraint." Management requirements must be designed to maintain air quality at levels that meets or **exceeds** (emphasis added) Federal, State and/or local standards or regulations." (Section 219.27(a)(12)) Based on these two planning principles, it seems reasonable for the LTBMU to consider an alternative that results in less air emissions due to prescribed fires that may include significantly more biomass removal or other actions resulting in less material that would be left to burn in a prescribed fire.

The following corrections need to be made in the figures and text in this evaluation:

1. Figures 3-21, 3-22 and 3-23 all depict similar comparisons of pollutant emissions from wildfire, prescribed fire and the combined under the four alternatives. Given the nature of the comparison, it is appropriate to use identical units in the figures. However, the draft EIS uses tons x 10,000 for the vertical axis on two figures and tons x 1,000 on one figure. This change in units can easily be overlooked and could result in different conclusions being drawn from the figures since one looks at representative comparisons in figures.
2. The text below table 3-17 on page 3-70 is not consistent with the table and figures. The text indicates that Alternative C produces the largest aversion of GHG and black carbon emission while the table and figures indicate that Alternative B results in the largest aversion.

## OTHER ISSUES

- A. Vegetation management activities are very important to address the high fuel loads that exist in the Tahoe Basin as in many area of the nation. Actions to reduce fuel loads is essential to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire. It is noted that the Standards and Guidelines associated with these activities are mostly designated as Guidelines giving the LTBMU broad discretion in project design. However, as stated above, most of the guidelines are drafted without defining the performance objective that deviations are to be compared for equivalent protections. Regardless, it should be explicitly stated that there might be situations where some level of environmental impact will occur due to the nature of the activity needed to accomplish the vegetation management actions needed to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire. The impact may occur, even with prescriptions that include best practices, as there may limitations on methods that can be used due to worker safety concerns or feasibility issues. The LTBMU should not be constrained by a Plan and supporting EIS that indicates that regardless of what is needed to address fuel loads, there will not be any environmental impacts.
- B. The EIS should evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with every aspect of all alternatives that increase the need for maintenance or enforcement to maintain conditions if funding for these additional needs is reduced or eliminated. Given the fiscal situation of our country, there is a reasonable likelihood that funding to the LTBMU will be reduced (this possibility is acknowledged in the EIS on page 3-2 and 3-3). One example of a situation that could result in an environmental impact is if roads are more heavily used (page 3-15, page 3-20: discussion of Alternative C) or are converted to a different maintenance level such that more maintenance is needed to preclude watershed impacts. If this maintenance is not done, what mitigation measures **would** be implemented to avoid impacts?
- C. The EIS does an adequate job of identifying the number of miles of mountain bike trails and acres of snow mobile area that would be eliminated if the wilderness designations of Alternatives C or D occur. However, the EIS makes only minor mention of the nature of the experience that would be eliminated. These areas have world renowned trails and vistas that are a primary reason for some people to visit this area. The LTBMU should evaluate if similar experiences are available rather than focus on number of miles or acres that would be eliminated.
- D. There are likely some resource protections that are needed and would be addressed by the wilderness designations proposed in Alternatives C and D. The LTBMU should do a more comprehensive evaluation of specific

resource concerns and consider area-specific standards and guidelines that would address these concerns. This path would address the concerns at a local level rather than rely on a wilderness designation that may not be approved and, if approved, could include other actions that may not be needed or warranted.

- E. In the discussion on page 1-15 of the EIS, the LTBMU identifies the two polar views of recreational opportunities. It fails to mention that there are likely significant numbers of people that do not find the existing conditions to be a problem and which alternative would address their desire. As with many public policy issues, the people that are most vocal are those that want change while those that are fine with the existing conditions are typically silent and may in fact represent a majority view point.
- F. Alternative C includes the concept of reducing the number of entries by thinning to the lower range of desired tree stocking levels (page 2-9 of EIS). This concept should be incorporated into the vegetation management section of Alternative B where it is determined that multiple entries could cause significant: ground disturbance; disruption of recreational opportunities; or effect on wildlife, even if these effects are less than significant. Such actions would further minimize potential impacts and may be cost effective. While this would require more project-specific analysis, there may be situations where this course of action is more appropriate.
- G. The Plan should limit the removal of trees 30 inch dbh and larger to a more limited number of circumstances than currently proposed (SG33) and this should be a standard rather than a guideline since it already includes criteria for deviation. Criteria a, b and g should be retained while criteria c, d, e and f should be eliminated as a basis for removal of these large trees. The Lake Tahoe basin is an urban forest that likely has more public access than many other forests. Our actions over the years have significantly altered the nature of this forest. Large trees, which have according to the EIS, were historically part of the forest landscape and these trees have an esthetic quality that is difficult to quantify. Given that the EIS acknowledges that implementation of all alternatives will achieve the desired vegetation management conditions, the main variable being time to achieve these conditions, the LTBMU should minimize removal of these trees.
- H. The quantities listed in table 3-1 on page 3-5 of the EIS seem incomplete and may be inaccurate. In the first two rows it is unclear if the number 154,830 represent visits or acres and if the two numbers listed are really the same. The values for motorized summer seem to be missing. Row 4 (Resorts and Lodges) seems to be missing a value for either number or acres.

## CONCLUSION

While the LTBMU has put a significant effort into the preparation of this Plan and EIS, more analysis is needed to make it complete and accurate. Additionally, the apparent limit of accepting all the components of a single alternative should be modified to giving the commenter opportunities to suggest combining various resource-specific alternatives. Given the procedural issues, the LTBMU has the opportunity to address the issues raised and re-circulate a draft Plan and EIS.

Sincerely,

/s/

Harold Singer

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Notice

## Environmental Impacts Statements; Notice of Availability

A Notice by the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) on 06/01/2012

*Responsible Agency:* Office of Federal Activities, General Information (202) 564-7146 or <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/>.

Weekly receipt of Environmental Impact Statements

Filed 05/21/2012 Through 05/25/2012

Pursuant to [40 CFR 1506.9](#).

## Notice

Section 309(a) of the Clean Air Act requires that EPA make public its comments on EISs issued by other Federal agencies. EPA's comment letters on EISs are available at:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/eisdata.html>.



*Supplementary Information:* EPA is seeking agencies to participate in its e-NEPA electronic EIS submission pilot. Participating agencies can fulfill all requirements for EIS filing, eliminating the need to submit paper copies to EPA Headquarters, by filing documents online and providing feedback on the process. To participate in the pilot, register at: <https://cdx.epa.gov>.

*EIS No. 20120165, Draft EIS, USACE, FL, Central Florida Phosphate District, Phosphate Mining, To Expand Existing Mines and Create New Phosphate Mines, Issuance of Permits, USACE Section 404 Permit, Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardee, Lee, Manatee, Polk, and Sarasota Counties, FL, Comment Period Ends: 07/16/2012, Contact: John Fellows 813-769-7067*

*EIS No. 20120166, Draft EIS, BLM, NV, Hollister Underground Mine Project, Transitioning from Underground Exploration Activities to a Full Scale Producing Underground Gold and Silver Mine, Elko County, NV, Comment Period Ends: 07/16/2012, Contact: Janice Stadelman 775-753-0346*

*EIS No. 20120167, Draft EIS, USFS, OR, Mt. Bachelor Ski Area Improvements Project, Implementation, Bend-Ft. Rock Ranger District, Deschutes National Forest, Deschutes County, OR, Comment Period Ends: 07/16/2012, Contact: Amy Tinderholt 541-383-4708*

*EIS No. 20120168, Revised Draft EIS, USFS, 00, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, Land and Resource Management Plan, Updated Forest Plan, Implementation, Alpine, El Dorado, Placer Counties, CA and Douglas and Washoe Counties, AZ, Comment Period Ends: 08/29/2012, Contact: Randy Moore 707-562-900*

*EIS No. 20120169, Final Supplement, USFS, OR, Invasive Plant Treatments within the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests and the Crooked River National Grassland, Updated Information on Three New Alternatives, Proposal for Treatment of Invasive Plant Infestation and Protection of Uninfested Areas, Implementation, Several Cos. OR, Review Period Ends: 07/02/2012, Contact: Debra Mafera 541-416-6588*

*EIS No. 20120170, Final EIS, USFS, MN, Federal Hardrock Mineral Prospecting Permits Project, To Conduct Mineral Exploration Drilling and Geophysical Activities on the Superior National Forest, Issuance of Special Use Permit, Cook, Lake, St. Louis and Koochiching Counties, MIN, Review Period Ends: 07/23/2012, Contact: Peter Taylor 218-626-4368.*

*EIS No. 20120171, Final EIS, BLM, MN, Adoption—Federal Hardrock Mineral Prospecting Permits Project, To Conduct Mineral Exploration Drilling and Geophysical Activities on the Superior National Forest, Issuance of Prospecting Permits, Cook, Lake, St. Louis and Koochiching Counties, MN, Review Period Ends: 07/23/2012, Contact: Kurt Wadzinski 414-297-4408.*

U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has adopted the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service Final EIS. BLM was a cooperating agency for the above project, recirculation of the FEIS is not necessary under Section 1506.3(3) of the CEQ Regulations.

As a cooperating agency, the Bureau of Land Management will issue a Record of Decision (ROD) that will be available at the conclusion of the FEIS review period but no sooner than 50 days from the beginning of the Forest Service appeal period.

Dated: May 29, 2012.

Cliff Rader,

Director, NEPA Compliance Division, Office of Federal Activities.

[FR Doc. 2012-13356 Filed 5-31-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-50-P